

VZCZCXYZ0014
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBK #2470 1220841
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 020841Z MAY 07
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6611

UNCLAS BANGKOK 002470

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

FOR PM/DTCC -- ADAM ARNETT

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: ETTC KOMC TH
SUBJECT: BLUE LANTERN LEVEL 3 -- POST-SHIPMENT CHECK ON
LICENSE 05-050026222

REF: SECSTATE 42554

¶1. The Ministry of Commerce lists Yothin Firearms Ltd., Partnership as follows:

Registration No. 0103511016371
Registered Date: 18 OCT 1968
Name: The Yothin Firearms Ltd., Partnership
Capital Registration: 300,000 baht
Business Partners: Mr. Phiraphon Buppharamni
Ms. Yuwadi Buppharamni
Mr. Thitithon Buppharamni
Mr. Suthep Rungruang
Mr. Thanaphon Buppharamni
Manager is Mr. Suthep Rungruang
Location: 43 Burapha Road, Wang Burapha Phirom Sub-District,
Phra Nakhon District, Bangkok
The Business submitted annual financial reports in 1999-2005

Yothin Firearms Ltd., Partnership is listed in the telephone directory with the phone number 02-623-8923-4

¶2. On April 26, POL FSN made an unannounced visit to Yothin. The business is located in a four-story concrete building in a busy shopping area. There were six employees at work at the time of the visit. No guns were displayed in the shop window but were stored in a safe and made available for inspection. The shop does not have a CCTV system, security guard or iron bars on the windows. The showroom is on the ground floor of the building and living quarters are on the second floor.

The safe has three locks and was custom installed on the ground floor. It measures 180cm x 130cm x 70 cm. After hours, the shop is sealed with a roll-down iron gate.

POL FSN was shown around the office by Mr. Thitithon and introduced to Mr. Thanaphon and Mr. Suthep. They answered the questions provided in reftel as follows:

--Thitithon and Thanaphon confirmed the February receipt of the lot of weapons outlined in reftel. Most of that lot has already been sold. This lot and its import permit originally belonged to Ms. Priyanut Ninrit, who owns a shop in Surin Province in NE Thailand. The permit is numbered 1/2549, dated November 10, 2006 to expire on November 9, 2007. The permit was presented to POL FSN and is as described in reftel. The permit was legally transferred to Yothin with a seal of approval signed by Muang Surin District Chief Mr. Suphon Limangkun. (Note, it is normal legal practice in Thailand for shops in small markets to sell or contract firearm import permits to larger concerns so long as the transfers are approved by the authorities.)

--The Company was established in October 1968. It is family run. Mr. Phiraphon and Ms. Yuwadi are married and the

parents of Mr. Thitithon and Mr. Thanaphon. Thitithon and Thanaphon took over the business in 2003. The shop has valid possession and firearms sales permits issued by the Department of Provincial Administration, Ministry of Interior, No. 178/2549, dated October 2, 2006 to expire on October 1, 2007.

Yothin's purchase order no. YT-019/06 to the RSR Group, Inc. was presented and is as described in reftel.

--The purpose of the business is to import and sell firearms and gun accessories. Yothin sells both handguns and rifles. The shop sometimes serves as a broker for other shops. Yothin manages seven other gun shops all owned by the same family. The company maintains a commercial link with over 20 gun shops nationwide.

--The typical customers includes law enforcement officers, sportsmen, civil servants, gun collectors and private citizens. All customers are required to present a gun purchase permit issued by the Department of Provincial Administration in Bangkok or by District Chiefs outside the capital. The shop maintains a ledger of customer names and permits but has no computer files. Yothin has never sold weapons to foreign nationals.

--POL FSN inspected large, hard-bound ledgers with appropriate records of all customers. The Department of Provincial Administration and related District offices maintain the same information. Yothin normally keeps records 7-10 years but the state agencies keep records permanently.

--The employees were familiar with USML restrictions, particularly those against unauthorized re-transfer.
BOYCE